

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 221045Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8715

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 12872

EXDIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, XF

SUBJECT: ATHERTON CALL ON FAHMY: LEBANON

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH FAHMY (SEPTTEL), I RAISED QUESTION OF LEBANON.

2. I TOLD FAHMY I HAD SEEN AMBASSADOR GODLEY IN AMMAN AND THAT HE FELT LEBANESE MUST SOLVE PROBLEM OF LEBANON. THIS, SAID FAHMY, IS ALSO GOE POSITION. FAHMY ASKED IF AMBASSADOR GODLEY IS "ACTIVE" IN BEIRUT. I SAID HE IS IN TOUCH WITH LEBANESE LEADERS. FAHMY ASKED IF HE IS IN CONTACT WITH FRANGIE. I REPLIED THAT HE SPOKE TO ALL GOL NOTABLES, BUT CHIEFLY KARAMI. USG HAS ATTEMPTED TO CONVEY TO ALL PARTIES, ESPECIALLY KATA'IB, THAT MARINES ARE NOT ON THEIR WAY AND THAT SOCIO-POLITICAL SITUATION MUST BE RESTRUCTURED WHILE PRESERVING SAFETY OF ALL COMMUNITIES. FAHMY AGREED THERE WAS LITTLE USG COULD DO DIRECTLY OTHER THAN ACTIVELY PERSUADING ISRAEL NOT TO MAKE THINGS MORE COMPLICATED.

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2. I ASKED FAHMY ABOUT SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON, WHICH USG

SEES AS HAVING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS. FAHMY REMARKED SYRIANS ARE DEFINITELY SENDING WEAPONS THROUGH RIF'AT ASAD TO CHRISTIANS (TONY FRANGIE) AND SAID SARG NOW IN DIFFICULT POSITION. THEY HAD BEEN WRONG TO INVITE GEMAYYEL TO DAMASCUS. IT WAS NOW KNOWN THAT CHRISTIAN GROUP HAD KILLED FOUR OF THEIR OWN CO-RELIGIONISTS IN ORDER EMBARRASS GEMAYYEL FOR GOING TO DAMASCUS.

3. FAHMY SAID EGYPT IS DOING WHAT IT CAN AND IS IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH ALL PARTIES. LEBANESE ARCHBISHOP MAXIMOS HAKIM (SYRIAN CATHOLIC) HAD MET FAHMY THIS MORNING AND HAD SUGGESTED HIGH-LEVEL RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE, INCLUDING RECTOR OF AL-AZHAR. FAHMY HAS NOT YET SPOKEN TO SADAT, BUT THINKS THIS IS GOOD IDEA. HE WILL SEND RECTOR OF AZHAR TO JOIN LEBANESE RELIGIOUS DIGNITARIES. FAHMY ADDED THAT FOR THREE MONTHS HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO ARRANGE LIMITED SUMMIT, BUT SAG AND OTHERS HAVE BEEN HESITANT. UNFORTUNATELY, KING KHALID HAS NOT BEEN RECEPTIVE TO FAHMY'S URGINGS OF LAST THREE MONTHS THAT KING SHOULD CONVENE SUCH MINI SUMMIT TO TRY TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM.

4. FINALLY, GOE BELIEVES RETURN VISIT BY COUVE COULD HELP. FAHMY HAS FRANGIE'S INFORMAL AGREEMENT ON THIS, AND IS PRESSING FOR FORMAL REQUEST FROM FRANGIE TO EGYPT, ASKING CAIRO TO CONTACT GISCARD TO SEND COUVE BACK TO LEBANON. EGYPTIANS HAD ENCOURAGED KHALID TO SPEAK SERIOUSLY ABOUT LEBANON TO SYRIANS WHEN HE IS IN DAMASCUS. EGYPTIANS NOW HOPE THAT COUVE'S ARRIVAL IN LEBANON WILL COINCIDE WITH KHALID'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS.

5. SYRIANS, FAHMY BELIEVES, WANT TO SETTLE LEBANESE PROBLEM NOW. MAXIMOS HAD TOLD FAHMY THIS AND FAHMY DEFINITELY AGREES. HOPEFULLY, THEREFORE, EGYPT'S INITIATIVE MAY DO SOME GOOD. EILTS

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